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PRESS RELEASE

U.S. MILITARY HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE PROJECT BUILDS SHELTERS/SCHOOLS

DHAKA, FEBRUARY 8 -- The United States Government will begin groundbreaking for Multi-Purpose Cyclone Shelters in the Cyclone Sidr affected areas of Khulna and Barisal between February 8-11. Groundbreaking sites include Deuli Palli Mongal High School in Mirzaganj Upazila, Pahkimara PV High School in Kalapara Upazila, and AC Lala High Schools and Khoalia Abdul Rashid Khan College in Morrelganj Upazila. These are the first four of twenty-four multi-purpose cyclone shelters funded by the U.S. Pacific Command and will be used daily as schools when not needed for emergencies. These humanitarian assistance projects are part of a 2008 agreement between the United States and Government of Bangladesh that provides \$4.3 million in funds for the construction of multi-purpose cyclone shelters and bridges.

The United States Government is committed to assisting the Government of Bangladesh and its people. The message of the U.S. Government to the people of Bangladesh is a simple one: We were here before the cyclone; we were here during the initial emergency relief phase; and we are here to help Bangladesh move forward. The United States Government has provided more than \$5 billion in development assistance to Bangladesh since independence. Immediately after Cyclone Sidr, the United States Government provided \$30 million in emergency food assistance and \$6.5 million for non-food emergency relief activities. The United States also is providing \$100 million in cyclone assistance for emergency relief, rehabilitation, and sustainable development in poor and vulnerable Cyclone Sidr affected areas (including villages and chars). This continuing assistance reflects the U.S. commitment to helping build a brighter tomorrow for Bangladesh's most vulnerable citizens.

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Note: A Bangla translation of this press release is also available at the American Center. If you are interested in the translation, please call the American Center Press Section, Tel: 8837150-4, Fax: 9885688; e-mail: DhakaPA@state.gov; Website: [http:// dhaka.usembassy.gov](http://dhaka.usembassy.gov)